

To: Members of the Public Health Committee

From: Mark Bernacki, Owner, Sir Speedy Print Center, New Britain;

Re: Concerns about HB-6328, An Act Concerning Customer Access To Restrooms in Retail Establishments

Date: February 6, 2009

Dear Honorable Committee Members:

I write to you with much concern about HB-6328. This issue is of concern to me for two reasons, as the father of a child with Chron's, and as a small-business owner for past 19 years.

My son has Crohn's disease and has had 2 MAJOR operations. He never once used an employee restroom at a restaurant or retail establishment and always used the public restroom wherever we went.

If the issue is making sure "public" restrooms are as clean as "employee" restrooms then I agree. Otherwise what is the issue here? My fear is that this legislation will open up public access to non-public establishments.

For example, would my business, Sir Speedy, be mandated to provide public use of our private bathroom? If so, my insurance agent will flip out since public access through my production area is STRONGLY discouraged for liability purposes. While the proposed legislation may attempt to address this problem, who really makes this determination?

Also, my son does not carry a "card" with him. We never knew one existed. How is a general business owner supposed to know about these "cards" and their purpose when I, as a business owner with a child who suffers from Chron's, do not even know about them?

My fear with this type of legislation is the creeping incrementalism that will start a government mandated benefit for the public at the detriment of private business.

Thank you for consideration of my comments. If you have any questions, please feel free to call me at 860-826-1798.